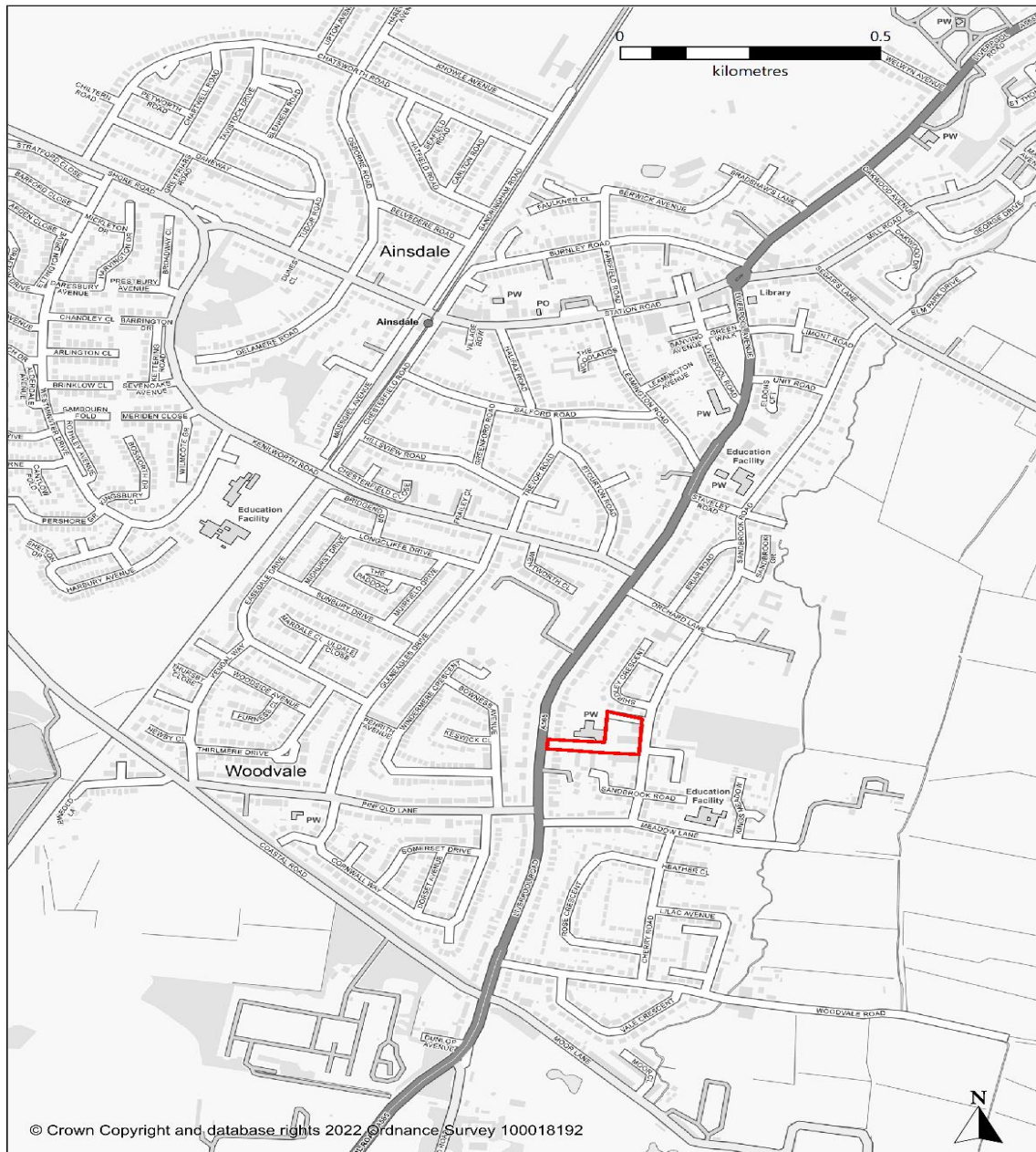


Appendix 1

Sandbrook Way – Development Brief – Jan 2023

1.0 Purpose of Brief

This Brief has been produced in order to provide guidance for the redevelopment of the site at Sandbrook Way, Ainsdale. The Brief sets out the broad planning and development issues relevant to the site and the key issues that a developer will need to address as part of any redevelopment proposals for the site.



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This guidance is not exhaustive and there are likely to be other issues that will need to be addressed as part of a planning application. This guidance represents informal advice only to assist prospective developers and will not prejudice any decision by the Council should an application be submitted.

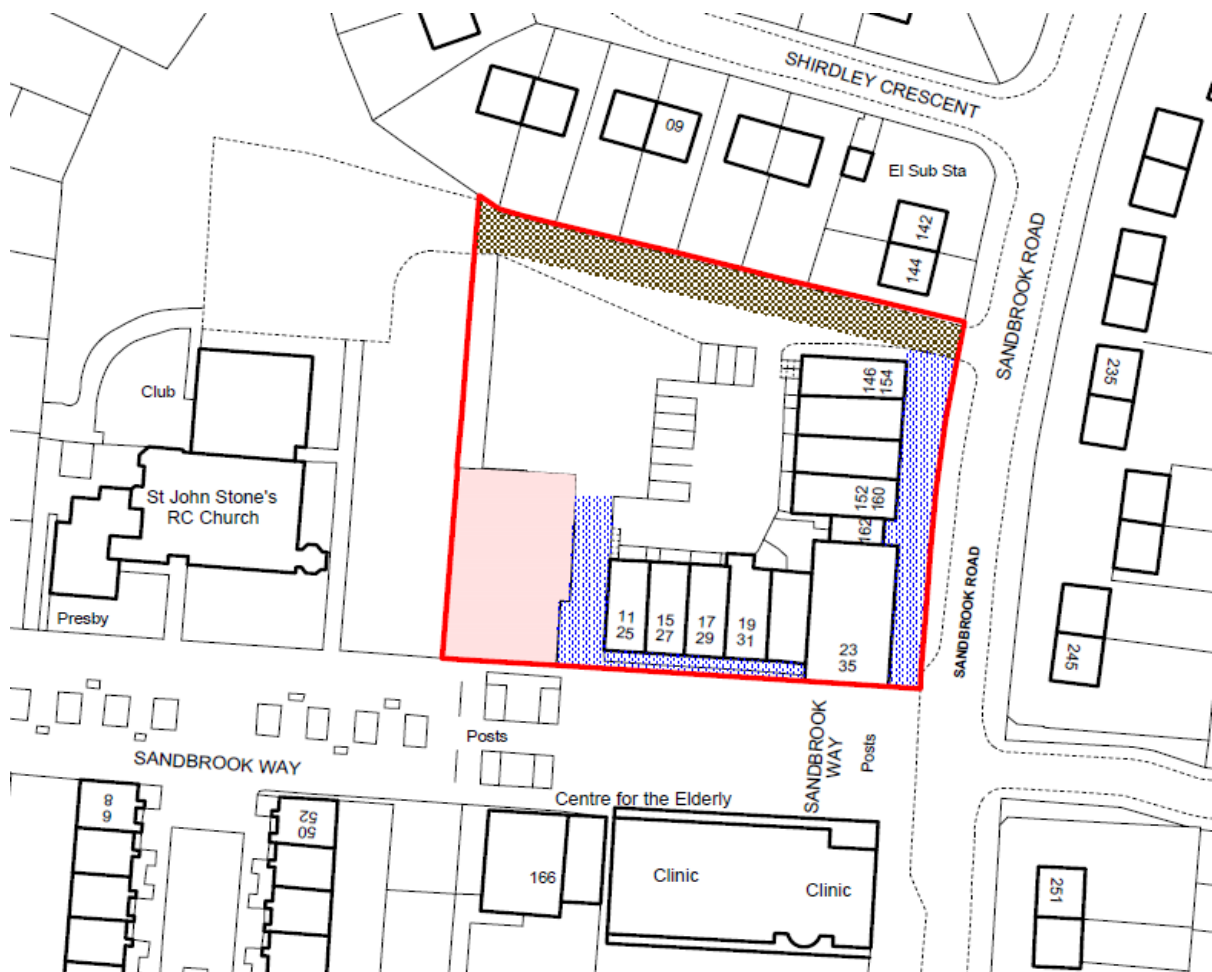
It is essential that in all cases formal pre-application advice is sought from the Council. This will allow a detailed consideration of any scheme, including the input of specialists in various fields. Details can be found at

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/apply-for-permission/pre-application-advice-on-development-proposals.aspx>

A fee is charged for this service. Developers will also be required to carry out appropriate community consultation.

2.0 Site Description

The Sandbrook Way Neighbourhood Centre is located at the junction of Sandbrook Way and Sandbrook Road in Ainsdale. Sandbrook Road is a local distributor route, whilst Sandbrook Way is a wide pedestrianised thoroughfare linking from Sandbrook Road through to Liverpool Road, the main A565 trunk road from Liverpool to Southport.



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With reference to the above plan the blue area delineates adopted highway, the black area is a right of way the Church have over the land to access the Church Hall. The pink area is the site of the former Sandpiper Pub, now demolished.

The buildings date from 1967 and were designed as a local centre providing retail and leisure uses together with residential accommodation. The main buildings were arranged in an “L” shape. To the ground floor there were a total of 9 “lock up” type retail units, 5 fronting Sandbrook Way and 4 fronting Sandbrook Road. At the corner of the “L” there was a larger food supermarket type building. To the first floor there were 10 self-contained flats, each accessed from the rear of the building

The Sandbrook Way Neighbourhood Centre was designed and developed in the late 1960s as a mixed-use retail and residential development to provide for local needs. The use and occupation of the Centre has declined significantly over the years, as has the physical condition of the buildings.

The surrounding area is characterised by established housing, although to the lower end of the market scale, and limited other commercial, retail or leisure provision. Immediately opposite is the Ainsdale Centre for Health and Wellbeing whilst next to the centre is St John Stone’s Centre and social club. Notably there is a large area of public realm at Sandbrook Way in the form of a pedestrian link between Sandbrook Road and Liverpool Road. This is a significant public resource but has suffered from under investment.



Presently the Centre is in poor condition, is underutilised and provides limited occupational utility. The extent of retail provision has significantly declined with many of the former retail units converted to residential use and larger users having vacated and not been replaced. The physical condition of the Centre has deteriorated and in many cases is now beyond economic repair.

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Overtime the buildings and uses have changed. The majority of the retail units have been converted to residential use and only 3 units remain in commercial use including a small convenience store, a fast-food outlet and a motor factors business. Some of the flats continue to be occupied whilst others are vacant and in disrepair. The former supermarket unit has had a number of different uses including a public house / nightclub but is currently vacant and derelict. The former Sandbrook publichouse has been demolished and the site cleared to ground level. The service yard is in a poor order and the garages are largely unused and derelict. The remainder of the site is unused.

In total the area of the site is approximately 2.04 acres which includes both the main site and Sandbrook Way. The main site is in the freehold ownership of the Council.



3.0 Current Ownership

Whilst the Council is the freeholder of the Centre, each of the current and former retail units and the individual flats are held on separate 99-year leases from 1967. As a result, no interest has effective control and there are currently no provisions for common maintenance, repair, or renewal.

The overall condition and appearance of the Centre is poor and has been subject to ongoing and increasing anti-social behaviour resulting in a considerable negative impact on the surrounding local community and area. The condition of the Centre continues to deteriorate and there is little apparent commitment to major repairs or renewal.

Given the fragmented multiple-ownership scenario, the Council Cabinet in February 2020 approved an approach to acquire all the existing leasehold interests in the Centre to bring it under one single ownership so that the Council will be in control of property interests to affect an appropriate

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development solution. Whilst those negotiations are continuing, the multiplicity of ownerships means that assembly of the necessary interests is needed to bring forward site development. The Council intends to continue with the land assembly to bring the whole of the Centre into a single ownership.

4.0 Policy Context

Sefton Council has an up-to-date development plan; the Sefton Local Plan (adopted April 2017). The Local Plan can be viewed at the following link,

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-including-local-plan-and-neighbourhood-planning/local-plan.aspx>

The site is located within the Primary Residential Area as most local shopping parades in Sefton are. Policy HC3 of the Sefton Local Plan sets out that

- New residential development will be permitted in Primarily Residential Areas shown on the Policies Map where consistent with other Local Plan policies.
- Non-residential development will be permitted in Primarily Residential Areas provided that it can be demonstrated that the proposal:

- a. will not have an unacceptable impact on the living conditions of neighbouring properties, and
- b. will otherwise not harm the character of the residential area, and
- c. will not undermine objectives of the plan regarding housing delivery.

As the site was originally planned as a local shopping parade to serve local needs, it is considered to offer potential for replacement retail and service provision subject to any such proposals being consistent with retail and town centre policy as set out in the NPPF and adopted plan (Policy ED2). Policy ED2 sets out the Council's approach to retail, leisure and other main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF glossary). This seeks to direct retail, leisure and other town centre uses to Sefton's existing defined centres. Proposals for retail, leisure and other town centre uses are required to be subject to a Sequential Assessment and, depending on the size, an Impact Assessment. Ainsdale Local Centre is a particular consideration in respect of these assessments.

The Local Plan is supported by a series of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Information Notes. Due to the potential different uses that the site could accommodate, a number of the SPDs and information notes may be applicable. The SPDs and Information notes can be viewed as follows

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/SPD>.

There is also a highways developers pack which any developer should use to help guide their development.

<https://www.sefton.gov.uk/parking,-roads-travel/highway-development-and-design.aspx>.

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The regeneration of the Neighbourhood Centre is part of the Council's Growth and Strategic Investment programme which comprises a portfolio of projects for the delivery of the Vision and Core Purpose of the Council. The programme supports the Core Purpose of the Council which states that, *"As place-leaders we will facilitate and enable happy, safe and resilient communities"*.

The Council developed Vision 2030, a corporate strategy for the future of the borough. Vision 2030 is to guide long term planning and seeks to stimulate growth, prosperity, set new expectation levels and focussing on what is important for Sefton. The Core Purpose provides an outline on how the Council will contribute to achieving those ambitions set out in the Vision 2030. The Council's major change programme the Framework for Change supports the Council Vision. Vision 2030 states that Sefton will become a confident and connected Borough through being:

- Together a stronger community
- A Borough for everyone
- A Clean green beautiful Borough
- Living working and having fun
- On the Move
- Visit explore and enjoy
- Ready for the Future
- Open for Business

To progress the most appropriate regeneration option for the site, the Council has undertaken an Options Appraisal, and the following objectives have been agreed to guide the Appraisal process:

Social:

- Meet the aspirations of the local community
- Address issues of antisocial behaviour and the negative impact on the surrounding area more generally

Environmental:

- Provide high quality and manageable public realm with a defined purpose
- Secure accessibility to and permeability through the Centre

Economic:

- Secure optimal investment for regeneration
- Optimise utilisation and provide long term viable

5.0 Potential Use

As stated above, the site is designated in the Local Plan as being in a primary Residential Area. The site lends itself to a mix of potential uses subject to addressing relevant planning policies and as such, an Options Appraisal has recently been undertaken to identify the most sustainable use for the site.

The Options Appraisal

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In order to identify the most effective and sustainable use for the site, the Council has undertaken a Site Options Appraisal for the site identifying potential options for development. An economic assessment of the options for the Centre, based on a review of the outputs arising from each option, sets out an assessment of benefits, in general compliance with the HM Treasury Green Book (2022), alongside appraisal guidance published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. In addition to this, it presents an assessment of economic impact at the local level, including assessments of Gross Value Added (GVA) and household expenditure

The options appraisal has assisted the Council in making an informed decision on how to deliver the best solution for the regeneration of the Centre. It considered the relative advantages and disadvantages of a number of different development options which will assist the Council in considering the relative desirability, viability and feasibility of the different options, and to examine:

- the best way to achieve the Council's project objectives
- the best way to use the resources available, and
- the best way to achieve the required outcomes

The options appraisal has been informed by engagement with key stakeholders and identifies a preferred model of delivery including the financial extent of both internal and external funding resources.

Whilst alternative options have been identified based on the overall assessment including the market testing, consultation, financial viability assessment and the economic benefit assessment, the preferred option is a comprehensive development solution for the site based on a standalone foodstore with appropriate public realm and infrastructure, together with other development as appropriate. However, this use is dependent on the provisions of Local Plan Policies HC3 and ED2 being met (see above). Key to the development will be the provision of a new vehicular link through to Liverpool Road along the existing Sandbrook Way. There would be no vehicular access to the site from Sandbrook Road.

6.0 Key Issues

Design

Local Plan policy *EQ2 Design* sets out a number of design considerations. These include responding to the character of the area and the importance of landmark (prominent) sites. The site is in a prominent location and is very visible from Sandbrook Road and is bounded by predominantly residential uses, with the NHS Wellbeing Centre to its southern boundary, and St John Stone RC Church at its western Boundary. Given its location, a high-quality building in terms of size, appearance and materials with very high design standards is essential. It is important that any proposal respects the immediate area and context.

The Council considers that a design solution that considers some appropriate development to parts of Sandbrook Way which are not required for the access road may assist with the animation of the space, security, natural surveillance.

Access and parking:

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Apart from the required vehicular access to the St John Stone site, there will be no vehicular access to the site from Sandbrook Road. All vehicular access will be via a new road access from Liverpool Road along the current Sandbrook Way pedestrianised area. There will be pedestrian access to the site both from Liverpool Road and Sandbrook Road.

All car parking associated with the site should be contained within the redline boundary of the site as identified above. Any planning application will need to provide full details of the proposed pedestrian/vehicular access arrangements. Car parking should be identified in accordance with Sefton's Supplementary Planning Document 'Sustainable Travel and Development'. The proposal should not result in additional car parking off site. Given the proximity of existing residential properties, any retail development will require details of any proposed servicing and delivery arrangements which will need to be discussed with the Council.

It is important to note that uses that generate a significant amount of traffic will need to be acceptable in this location. In this regard the Council will expect to see a transport assessment. The Council have standards for electric car charging points which are expected to be addressed. Any development will be expected to be fully accessible to a range of non-transport modes including walking and cycling. The site is in a very good location with access to public transport networks and other shops and services in Ainsdale town centre.

Environmental Health and Air Quality

The site is near to the A565 Liverpool Road. This is a section of road that is very close to the top of the current national air quality standards for Nitrogen Dioxide. Any use that would generate a significant number of additional car journeys has the potential to increase those levels to a dangerous level. Therefore, any future development must not result in increased nitrogen dioxide emissions and an air quality assessment must be carried out by any potential developer.

The site is adjacent to residential properties around the site, and these may be sensitive to some use, plant and equipment and vehicle movements. Any scheme will need to be supported by an appropriate noise assessment.

Likewise lighting, both as part of a proposed scheme and existing lighting, could have an impact upon amenity of future users of the site and on neighbours and must be considered fully.

Other issues

Any external works or alterations, such as provision of any additional parking, servicing or access areas or alterations to doors and windows may be subject to contamination, flood risk, ecology, invasive species, a Habitats Regulation Assessment and other relevant issues.